

VZCZCXRO0557  
OO RUEHBW RUEHIK RUEHPW RUEHYG  
DE RUEHBUL #1150/01 1320729  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 110729Z MAY 08  
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3833  
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHMFIUU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 001150

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG  
NSC FOR JWOOD  
OSD FOR SHIVERS  
CG CJTF-82, POLAD, JICCENT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNANCE STRATEGIC WORKPLAN

REF: A. 07 KABUL 3054

[1](#)B. KABUL 829

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: The Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) on May 4 released its Five-Year Strategic Work Plan, a roadmap for provincial, district, and municipal governance. The plan focuses on four core functions: policy development, institutional development, participatory governance, and support. It is a reasonably well written and thoughtful document, and should play an important role in coordinating the previously scattershot approach to local governance. The plan's ambitious scope, however, will test the limited capacity of the IDLG. Its estimated cost of \$296 million over five years will have to be borne by the international community. The June Paris Support Conference is an opportune time to focus donors' attention on IDLG's efforts.

#### Strategic Plan Receives Presidential and UN Support

[1](#)2. (SBU) At a May 4 ceremony at the Palace, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) unveiled its Five-Year Strategic Work Plan before assembled diplomats and GIROA officials. Confirming his support for the directorate he created by decree in August (Ref. A), President Karzai described the plan as "well conceived, concise, and understandable." Karzai underscored the importance of a comprehensive plan to increase GIROA outreach to the people, while simplifying government procedures and reducing corruption. UN SRSG, Kai Eide, credited IDLG for a solid plan, and called upon the international community to support its quick implementation. The Strategic Work Plan, drafted with substantial support from the Asia Foundation, outlines four "core functions" including policy development, institutional development, broader governance, and other support functions.

#### The Four Core Functions

[1](#)3. (SBU) The Work Plan describes IDLG's policy function as the "development of a policy framework, rules and regulations for sub-national governance." IDLG will execute that function through "an inter-ministerial policy development process." President Karzai will establish the process by decree and entrust its leadership to one of his vice presidents. The plan specifies a timetable for policy development culminating in the drafting of local governance laws. The inter-ministerial policy development process is

expected to cost approximately \$4 million and will undoubtedly be controversial.

14. (SBU) IDLG lists the strengthening of sub-national governance institutions as its second core function. According to the Work Plan, this task entails the design and implementation of Public Administration Reform (PAR); the development of a capacity-building strategy; the upgrading of physical infrastructure for local institutions; support to municipalities; tackling corruption; and mapping political and administrative boundaries. IDLG estimates this function will cost \$126 million over five years, the bulk of which goes to upgrading infrastructure and support for the country's 147 municipalities.

15. (SBU) IDLG's third core function is its broader governance responsibilities, namely "the creation and provision of support for the participation of stakeholders and citizens in sub-national governance processes." This encompasses the directorate's role in coordinating local development activities, particularly in leading the implementation of provincial development plans (PDPs) and counter-narcotics policy. (Note: In conjunction with ANDS, IDLG led the successful March 2008 PDP Consultations.) Additionally, IDLG will focus on bridging the gap between the people and the government by engaging with representative bodies. The Afghan Social Outreach Program (Ref. B) is part of this effort to develop outreach mechanisms to connect government to often-alienated local populations.

16. (SBU) IDLG's final function is its role as a facilitator

KABUL 00001150 002 OF 002

in the implementation of national policies and programs at the sub-national level. This includes supporting, and coordinating the implementation of national initiatives like: elections, civil registry, census, land administration, disaster preparedness and response, and the promotion of culture. IDLG will define the appropriate role of sub-national institutions in these sectors, as well as develop a detailed program of activities to support each of these national activities.

#### IDLG Receives Wide Support

17. (SBU) Although only eight months old, IDLG has already had a considerable impact on local governance. The Work Plan is a logical next step, an overarching strategy to replace the inchoate, uncoordinated and often conflicting approaches to governance taken by the international community and the GIROA over the last five years. Strikingly, the Work Plan's ambition extends beyond core local governance elements to include economic development and counter-narcotics. This intrusion into other line ministries, territories will attract scrutiny from powerful ministers and the National Assembly and test IDLG's capacity to deliver.

WOOD